"IF YOU SEE IT IN The Sun IT'S SO."

The Sun.

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NEW YORK, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1894.—COPYRIGHT, 1894, BY THE SUN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION.

ON THE FAST MAIL.

FROM NEW YORK TO BOSTON ON THE RAILWAY POST OFFICE.

Mail Clerks Who Must Be Walking Cyclopedias—From Ten to Fifteen Tons of Mail Handled—The Strain Exhausting—Not a Little Danger Involved in the Work—Lots of Red Tape About the System.

The night trip of the fast mail between New York and Boston is one of the most interesting phases of the postal service. Two lighted lines of speed flashing forty miles an hour pass each other midway between the two great Eastern mail centres, New York and Boston, every night. On each train is a crew of thirteen men, who handle from ten to fifteen tons of mail each trip. On this line is assorted during the round trip the mail that goes through Boston and New England, New York city and New York State, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, the Western and Southern States. Besides these divisions distinct district, carrier, and box separations are made for both terminal cities. Eighty separations are made for Boston and nearly one hundred for New York. Three clerks assort New York city mails on the westward trip, and three others work Boston going east. New York is divided into branch offices alphabetically, each having its section of the city; Fifth avenue, for instance, is divided into perhaps half a dozen sections, and it is the mail clerk's business to know whether a letter addressed to 200 Fifth avenue goes to D, E, or F; then separations are made for big firms, newspapers, publishers, and books, and the postal clerk must know the box system of the New York Post Office perfectly. Thus a letter to New York after being bunched at the Post Office from which it starts upon its journey and locked in a New York pouch goes from the hands of the railway clerk without further sorting into the hands of the proper carriers at the branch office or the box of the big firm to which it is addressed.

That all this detail shall be carried out perfectly, that no smallest bundle of letters for a little New England town or a backwoods New York village shall fail to be ready locked in the proper pouch to be thrown off at Worcester or Springfield for the branch road connections, it is necessary that there shall be rapid work and accurate brains and flying fingers in the railway post office, and that each man's head should be a cyclopædia of the case he works at and of postal geography in general. The average day's work of the night postal clerk begins at 7 o'clock in the evening and at 6 o'clock the next morning he is glad to tumble into a bed in the dormitory in the Post Office building and sleep the sleep of weariness. On Sundays he works eighteen hours, and six days a week he averages thirteen hours. That he lives as long as other folks is due to the fact that he has an alternate week on and week off the year round. The clerical force of the night service of the Boston, Springfield and New York Railway Postoffice consists of thirty-six men, who take turns on the night crew.

This Post Office on wheels, as it stands sidetracked at the Grand Central Station with mail wagons rattling up to discharge their freight of pouches and the express wagons clattering in to add their loads to the express cars ahead, is one of the busiest places in all New York about 9 o'clock every night. And just now at the holiday season, when the mails are full of Christmas letters and Christmas packages, the mail clerks are as busy as so many Santa Clauses, with scarcely a breathing space between New York and Boston. Follow the line of mail wagons under the archway of the station, where the lights wink knowingly from the vista of long shadows and the rumble of trains and the shriek of locomotive whistles mingle with the expletives of the drivers as the minutes slip by and the hurry of transferring mail pouches to the crowded car begins. The clerk in charge, with a pencil stuck over his ear and his checking book in one hand, stands silhouetted in the doorway of the lighted car—the sliding doorway at the side—and as the wagon comes into range of the light he sings out:

"Hello, Bill! get a move on there!"

Bill backs the mail wagon to the car and begins to toss the pouches into the open door of the railway Post Office, with a glance at the label of each pouch and a stentorian call of the name aloud. The clerk in charge repeats the name, checks it off his list, and when the last pouch from that wagon is discharged sticks his pencil behind his ear again and hustles the pile of pouches out of range of the door, so that there may be clear space for the next arrivals. There may be from sixty-five to seventy-five pouches taken on at New York. The clerk in charge knows them all by heart, and calculates anxiously on the minute of their arrival. He is more worried over the late coming of a wagonful of branch office pouches than a lone woman over the delay of her baggage on a journey. He grumbles a little to the drivers of the late-coming wagons if he is out of sorts. He is usually good humored, however, even if the mail is unusually heavy and the pouches delayed, for there is something exhilarating in the last minutes of preparation and the start for the trip.

It is but two minutes before starting time, and the chief clerk is dancing on the leathern pile with excitement. One wagonload is late. It was due ten minutes ago. It is now only one minute before the start. A clatter of hoofs, a rush of wheels, a jolt as the wagon backs hastily against the car and the thuds of the pouches come fast and heavy, the last one falling as the train moves. The clerk slides to the door with a sigh of relief and falls to with his assistants to drag the last pouches out of the aisle and pile them up for future emptying as the train clatters over the Chinese puzzle of switches and signals flash red, green, and white in the darkness.

The railway Post Office is a busy place, and the men turn to their cases with scarcely a word over miles and miles of journeying. The letter car contains eight cases—four on either side, with a broad aisle between; two sections of pouch racks, two reversible tables, and beyond the sliding doors a space for the mail pouches. On the eastward trip two cases are devoted to Massachusetts, one to Maine, two to Boston, one to Connecticut, one to New Hampshire, and one to Vermont. There are in the Massachusetts cases 400 pigeonholes. These eight cases occupy more than half the car space. Then comes the pouch section with a score of pouches hanging on hooks on either side of the car. Below the single upper row of bags on the car sides hang double rows of pouches on long iron frames. The men at the letter cases are separating, distributing, bunching, and tying letters under a glare of gaslight. They are some of them working in their shirtsleeves, for the car is warm, though it is chilly enough outside in the darkness. They are a clear-eyed, intelligent set of men; perhaps less robust than the day workers, because thirteen hours of night work, standing in the jar of a flying train, with the brain tense and the eyes sharpened is not the most healthful life in the world.

There are men at the tables emptying the pouches in a great heap and sorting the bundles of letters into piles to be turned over to the men at the cases. The pouches are then hung in the rack under the proper labels, and the sorted bundles of letters that return from the cases are thrown into their respective pouches. The work is all done almost automatically in its quickness and routine, and by and by the clerk in charge finds the chance between stops to sit on a pile of mailbags and philosophize.

"Yes," he comments, "a man has to keep his wits about him in this business, or he doesn't stay in it long. I've been railroading in a mail car for a good many years, and I've got used to the life, but I'm pretty well used up at the end of my week, and willing to lie by. Thirteen hours a day and eighteen Sundays of this sort of work is a trying pace. About 6 o'clock to-morrow morning you'll understand what I mean. While we are on the go and on the jump to get the pouches ready for the next station we don't feel it so much, but some mornings I've got into the station so tired that it seemed as if in five minutes more I should have to drop. What salary? Well, a mail clerk is very well contented on $900 a year; he is a happy man on $1,200, and he can't get much beyond that. There is one thing about it, though. Uncle Sam is sure pay, and if a man keeps up to his average in work and per cent. on his examinations, and remains honest, he is sure of his place, no matter what hard times there are in other lines.

"No, it does not pay for a mail clerk to be dishonest. He is sure of getting found out. A few poor fellows have tried it, but always with the same result. I think you'll find, though, that we have a record for honesty in the postal service that is exceptional, considering the large amount of money and valuables that passes through the mail during a year. We handle thousands, and yet comparatively little of the mail losses are the fault of the railway mail clerks. It is more often the carelessness of some overworked station agent of a little place, who leaves his mail bags on the platform while he sleeps in the baggage room.

"Then life on a railway Post Office has considerable hazard about it. I've been in several smash-ups, but I've come out all right. We take our lives in our hands in this business. Sometimes it is tramps and fish-plates, sometimes it is a collision. We don't mind a little thing like running over a cow, but I was in an accident some years ago with horror enough to last a lifetime. It was when the mail train had a smash-up with a passenger train one winter night near a little station. The fireman was killed, and I thought I was pretty near death then myself. I was pretty well shaken up, and I'll carry the scar of it to my grave. Well, they carried us into the little waiting room of the station, and the women among the passengers that weren't in hysterics did all they could for us. There was an opera company on board the passenger train, and I never shall forget the courage and tenderness of the woman who sat down there on the floor of the station beside the fireman—and he was a horrible sight, what was left of him—and took his head in her lap. He was as black as a negro with grime, and cut and mangled, but he died with his head in her lap, and when the last breath left him she took her lace handkerchief and laid it over his dead face. She took off her fur cloak and wrapped it around me, and I tell you I was not a pleasant looking object, either. Those are times that show up the heart of a woman, and hers was gold. All sorts of experiences in a mail clerk's life!"

But the minutes had slipped by and the hours had followed like pale ghosts, and at forty miles an hour the mail train rushed toward the half-way mark of the trip, Springfield. Through the glass half of the side doors the starlit landscape passed like a panorama by blue limelight. The telegraph poles nodded knowingly as the train zigzagged around curves. The stations loomed out of the night like black shadows and shook their lights in answer to the shrill whistle. The waters slept by the barren woods, and it was a white, silent world of ghosts at 3 o'clock in the morning, until there came the swinging lights, the switch tower, the lines of freight cars, and the sleepy bustle of Springfield.

There had been a ten-minute intermission in the night's hurry before Springfield was reached, while the men lounged over their tables or among the mail bags, and caught a bite at sandwiches from paper bags. There was a little rest from the nerve tension, but nearing Springfield came the hurry of making ready the pouches for the city and its outlying connections. Bundles were thrust into bags, bags hastily labelled and locked. Each postal clerk carries a key with a special number on it, and to lose a key is a serious matter, "almost a felony," as one mail clerk said. The registered pouches have locks with rotary numbers on them which are guards against tampering, for the number is set on the first locking and goes on record, and any change of number indicates to the receiver a need of investigation. On each pouch is hung a little oblong tablet, into which is slipped a folded paper bearing on its face the destination of the mail and the stamp of the clerk who locked it; the staples are slipped through the eyelets in the pouch's mouth, the strap is run through the staples, the padlocks snapped, and the pouch is ready.

"Uncle Sam," said a postal clerk, with a smile somewhere between humor and sarcasm, "believes that the best way to keep men honest is to make it impossible for them to steal, so he has done up the postal service in yards of red tape, and we clerks have as much bookkeeping on our hands while we are working our brains in postal geography as the ordinary man who stands at his desk all day and does nothing but keep books. The system works well, though, and when there is any blame we know just where it belongs. We can trace every single letter or package that is registered through the various hands it touches, and in fifteen tons of mail matter, as there must be to-night, there is a minimum of loss because of that very system. It gives us gray hair early though. The clerk in charge has a trip report that gives the names of clerks on duty between points, the errors checked against them, the names of city distributers, and between what points the failure, if any, of mails; the failure, if any, to deliver mails; any irregularity in the receipt of newsdealers' packages; the orders for supplies; the pieces of local mail carried beyond its destination; the unworked mail, if any; the number of registered packages, pouches, and gold boxes, and the number of packages and letters distributed to the sixty-one stations, and the names of clerks distributing them. Then there are a weekly pouch report, special reports for mail failures, mail shortage notices, the registry system, and a great deal more that comes up in practical work. Beyond this we have to keep a lookout on railroad schedules, and, if the train is delayed and the usual set of connections with branch roads are upset, we must meet the emergency by despatching the mail by some other route, or else we are likely to be called to order by the superintendent."

Three minutes at Springfield, and the train rushes onward into the dawn of another day. Four o'clock, but the stars are still shining and the landscape ghostly, and the gas flares on haggard faces at the cases, and the clerks throw bundles and lock pouches with less energy though no lessening of the strain of hurry. One cheerful young man at the case down at the end of the car whistles a few bars of a popular air and the man next to him joins in. Then the music dies away in the slip, slip of letter sorting. The brakeman has curled himself up on the leather bags and gone fast asleep; he snores, and then wakes suddenly to rush to the platform. In five minutes he has laid himself in the midst of the leather again, and is snoring in time to the jolt of the train.

The men at the Boston cases work like compositors throwing type. Worcester is passed. There is a stop at South Framingham, and the dawn looks in at the windows. Boston comes next, with a turning out of the Back Bay pouches at the Huntington avenue station, the hanging up of empty pouches, the house-cleaning and straightening of racks and tables and the car in general. The last pouch is snapped to, the crew of grimy-faced, red-eyed, tired men, turn their cases for the westward trip, and the clerk in charge, with his pencil behind his ear, stations himself in the door of the railway Post Office to check off the pouches as the train draws up in range of the waiting mail wagons, and the clocks of the Hub strike 6 in the morning.

HE WANTED TO GET HOME.

A Little Bit of Human Comedy in a Fourth Avenue Car.

A Fourth avenue car was sleepily jogging along up town. At Twenty-fourth street a drunken tramp swung himself onto the back platform and stood there holding on to the rail as he swayed backward and forward with half-closed eyes.

The conductor was in the car collecting fares and did not at first see the new passenger, but when he did he said to him, "You can't ride on this car," and rang the bell and the car stopped at the next corner. Then he tried to push the tramp off, but he declined to move and clung to the bar of the railing. The conductor got angry and tried to throw the passenger from the platform, but he held on with both hands and was too big to be stirred. Then the conductor with both his hands jerked one of the tramp's hands loose, and then he changed to the other hand and pulled that loose, but, of course, the free hand had again seized the rail. This continued for some little time, the tramp saying nothing and making no active resistance.

Meantime, the passengers in the car were getting uneasy, men and women looking at their watches, evidently wondering whether they would catch their train or not. At last a little, short, fat man, whose face for some seconds had been growing redder and redder, sprang to his feet, rushed out on the platform, and ordered the conductor to start the car. "It's an outrage," he said, "that we should all be kept here. If you can't put that man off let the car go on. He is not doing anything, anyhow, and I can't stay here all day. I want to get home. Start your car, and don't keep all these people waiting here while you squabble with this drunken man. I want to get home."

The conductor replied civilly enough: "I can't carry this man. He has got to get off, and I am going to keep the car here until he does." Then he resumed his efforts to move the tramp, but the tramp was immovable. At last he gave it up and started the car. The little man returned to his seat, and pretended to read his paper, but his thoughts were not fixed on the news; they were out on the back platform with the conductor. Every time the latter came in to collect a fare the little man would abuse him, telling him what an outrage it was that the passengers should be so delayed, threatening to report him to the company, and winding up by announcing that he wanted to get home.

At Thirty-fourth street the tramp, who had not opened his mouth during the ride, swung off to get a transfer ticket, and the car went on. All the way through the tunnel the little man sat boiling with rage. As you looked at him you could see the waves of choler rise higher and higher in his breast until they overflowed in angry mutterings.

At the Harlem station the car stopped and the little man bounded from his seat to get off. In the doorway he halted again and addressed the conductor, telling him that he should report him for his outrageous treatment of the passengers, that he would have him removed from his place; he would see if the company would support a man who so inconvenienced the patrons of the line. All this and much more, while the other passengers who wished to get off crowded up to the door of the car and waited for him to move. As he did not do so, a tall, stately young woman, who seemed to be returning from a shopping excursion, said:

"I beg your pardon, sir. Will you kindly stand out of the way? I want to get home."

The little man looked over his shoulder and up into her face, and then sprang out of the way, while a wave of laughter rippled through the car.

Food for Man and Beast.

"We read sometimes," said Mr. Billtops, "of people 'eagerly devouring' a newspaper, but horses sometimes do that literally. Twice lately I have seen horses eating newspapers. Perhaps this might come under the head of 'taking in every word.'"

COPPER PLATING A VESSEL.

A GREAT PROBLEM IN SHIPBUILDING SAID TO HAVE BEEN SOLVED.

A Patent Process in Operation in Jersey City of Welding a Copper Coating Directly to the Steel Hull of a Vessel by Applying Electric Baths—If Successful a Revolution in Shipbuilding Will Come.

Over in Jersey City, at the foot of Warren street, there is an oceangoing tug on the dry dock, all housed in and carefully guarded from observation, on which an experiment is being tried which, if successful, will bring about a notable revolution in shipbuilding. The tug is the Assistance, formerly belonging to the Anchor line, and the experiment being tried on her is that of electroplating her hull. In other words, copper is being plated on the hull to the thickness of one-sixteenth of an inch by electricity. To do this successfully has been a problem which has occupied the attention of shipbuilders for scores of years. It is a constant subject of discussion in naval circles, and it has been declared that such a task was practically among the impossibilities.

A man of great fame in the electrical world is said to have remarked recently that when a man could pull himself up by the boot straps, then would it be possible to apply a copper coating to the iron or steel hull of a vessel. The owners of this new process say they are prepared to show that this man is mistaken in his estimate of the possibilities of this task, and they unhesitatingly assert that they have solved the problem. If what they say is true, and there is already ocular demonstration to prove it, it means that hereafter there will be no more foul bottoms of oceangoing vessels, for at moderate cost the hulls may be copper plated, and the result will be an enormous saving of coal, the prevention of pitting and the collection of barnacles on ships, and also the surety that the hulls will last as long as the other parts of vessels and with very little necessity of repair. Only recently one of our war ships burned 1,000 more tons of coal on her homeward trip from Rio than on her journey there, and her speed was two or three knots less, because of a foul bottom. Every two or three months it is necessary to place the liners in a dry dock to cleanse the hulls, and each time this is done it entails an enormous cost. Even in the boats that ply between New York and New Orleans this causes an expense of at least $2,000 each time they are cleaned. Constant painting of the hulls is necessary in all vessels, and if this new process can accomplish what its owners say it can, it means that henceforth there will be no more need of paint on any of the hulls.

There have been scores of suggestions as to the proper way to solve this problem. All sorts of paints and varnishes have been tried, and many hints have been thrown out that some special kind of lacquer would be found ultimately that would do the work. None has been successful, however, and seafaring men have practically given up trying to overcome the difficulties. Even within a few months the Navy Department of this country, in a report on this particular process, said it was not feasible; but now that it appears to be successful in operation the department is watching every step with the utmost vigilance and care, having an officer of the navy almost constantly on hand. Since he has been in office Secretary Herbert has recommended that some of our new boats be sheathed and then plated with copper, as some of the English naval vessels are finished, so as to insure long life to the hulls and save the large expense of constantly dry docking the vessels, and also to save the expense of the consequent cleansing and painting. Congress did not agree to his suggestion, and so this item of expense has grown larger year by year and the speed of our crack vessels has deteriorated voyage after voyage to the disappointment of the naval officials and the general public. The consumption of coal has also increased in such a way as to alarm the department because of its cost and the wear and tear on the machinery.

It has been suggested that one way to copper-cover vessels would be to place them in a dry dock and immerse them in a sulphide of copper bath and thus plate them. The expense of this would be so enormous that it could not be done, and that probably caused the remark about the boot straps. It would require an electric plant probably larger than that required to light an enormous city, and all experts say such a plan is absolutely out of the question.

The process now in operation in Jersey City is of the simplest design. In fact, it is nothing more than the ordinary process of electroplating that is in constant use in hundreds of places in this and other cities. The Ship Copper Plating Company, of which Mr. James H. George of this city is President, owns the patents in this country and all the chief European countries. The patent consists of the method of the application of the copper, electroplating itself being too old and too common to be secured by any patent. Mr. George bought the patents from a patent solicitor, who had never tried his invention, and without any practical demonstration that the patents were feasible. Mr. George, however, is a shrewd man, and from his study of the process was convinced of its utility, and has spent large sums already to prove his faith in the invention. His first step, after he secured the patents, was to send 200 miles off Sandy Hook to secure some water that he was sure was absolutely salt and not tainted by any fresh water that might come down to the ocean from the rivers. Then he took an iron tube four inches in diameter, sealed up one end, and had it copper plated by the process. He then stood the tube in this salt water and kept it there for many months. The tube showed no deterioration, and he was convinced that he had solved the puzzle that had been troubling shipbuilders for scores of years.

The next step was to prove the worth of the process by actual use. The tug Assistance was purchased and the plating is now two-thirds finished. It will be completed in about a month, and the tug will be placed in the scow-towing business of the city for a demonstration of its utility. If, after a few months, the hull of the tug shows no accumulation of barnacles, and no pitting or galvanic action, caused by the action of the sea water, the success of the venture will be complete, and a company will be formed to put the invention in actual use, not only in this country but abroad as well.

The Assistance was found to be especially adapted for the test. She is five years old, and had been painted only twice in all that time. Her hull was not only badly pitted, but was so seamed and rough that if a success could be made with her it could probably be achieved with any vessel afloat. The tug is also sufficiently large to demonstrate that the process could be applied to any vessel. She is 100 feet long and of nearly 90 tons. After having purchased the tug the first thing to do was to dry dock her and clean her absolutely. This is said to be the most difficult part of the new process. An acid bath was given to the tug, and then she was washed clean and every bit of paint that clung to the indentations in the hull had to be picked out. It was necessary that the hull should be free from every kind of impurity, or the copper would not stick. If the slightest place should not be covered by the copper, the salt water would cause galvanic action, and the hull would be destroyed in time. Having cleaned the hull thoroughly, an electric plant was set up on the land just alongside the dry dock, to use in the electroplating. Several dynamos were put in operation to secure the necessary quantity of electricity for the process of plating and the electric lights that are in constant use day and night.

The next thing to do was to apply the copper. All electroplating is done by giving the object to be plated a bath in copper sulphate, with the assistance of electricity. The electricity causes the copper in solution to become deposited on the object to be plated by passing a current through the bath and the object under treatment. This is the same process that is applied to the hull of the tug Assistance, only the baths are applied to the hull of the vessel in a slanting or upright position, as may be necessary. A box about a foot deep, water tight, and five feet square is made and fitted to the side of the hull in the particular spot which is to be operated upon and then it is shored against the side of the hull. The copper anodes are put in the top of the box, which remains open. The sides of the box are carefully calked to prevent any leakage and the current of electricity is turned on. The four anodes in each box constitute the positive pole, and the vessel itself constitutes the negative pole, and the current goes swishing through the solution to the hull, back to the dynamo, and then through the solution again to the hull at the rate of 2,000 times a second and slowly but surely a thin coating is deposited on the hull. This is kept up for twenty-four hours and then the sulphate bath is applied in the same way for forty-eight hours. At the conclusion of this it has been found that the copper is deposited on the vessel to the thickness of one-sixteenth of an inch and so firmly that it can be removed only by a cold chisel and a hammer. Even then it brings a part of the steel off with it, showing that the welding has been perfect. The naval expert who has been watching the experiment has tried to remove the plating half a dozen times, but it has always required a cold chisel and the hardest kind of work to accomplish it.

The work of copper plating the Assistance has been in charge of Henry Bergfels of Newark, who has had an experience of fifteen years or more in that work. He is enthusiastic over the success thus far, and does not hesitate to say that at first he had his misgivings about it. Now he is beyond all doubt in the matter. It has been found that the weight of the plating is only 2.85 pounds to the square foot. First-class paint would weigh nearly two pounds to the square foot, so that the extra weight added to a vessel is of little consequence. The cost, too, it is said, will be scarcely more than two or three times that of the paint, and it is estimated that the plating will last at least ten years, so that it will be seen easily wherein the practical utility and profit of the invention lies.

One of the objections to the process has been that in case of a collision, where a plate was broken, galvanic action would set in at once and the injured plates be destroyed. To offset this the friends of the new process assert that in such a case new plates would have to be supplied any way, and the galvanic action up to the time port would be reached would be so small as to be not worth considering. In speaking of this Mr. George said the other day:

"You cannot justly condemn the process on the ground of possible accident. If you did this, you would condemn every invention. The chances of accident are not one in ten thousand. If this is to enter into consideration, why build ships at all? Now and then one goes down; but does that stop shipbuilding? It certainly does not. Even in case of accident it will not be so serious as to endanger the ship at all. This process is easily applied, and it would be just as easy to put in a new plate, with this process to be applied afterward, as it would be to repair the ship under present conditions."

It is asserted also that under tests it has been found that in case of breakage the steel backing to the new process will break before the copper, thus adding to safety of vessels in time of collision. A naval officer has also asserted that in case of such an accident to a man-of-war all that would be necessary would be to build a coffer dam around the injured plate, and then turn on the ship's own dynamos and repair the injury then and there.

There is great interest in the experiment that is being tried on the Assistance. The chief engineers of half a dozen steamship lines have inspected the work, in addition to the navy expert that the Government has had looking after it, and it is safe to say that no vessel in New York harbor will be watched with greater interest than this tug after she gets into actual work in salt water again. Of course, it is necessary that every part of the hull shall be covered with the copper or galvanic action will set in and destroy its use. The utmost care is taken, therefore, and if the vessel does the work that is expected of her a revolution in shipbuilding will be accomplished in the next few months. An elaborate plant will then be set up, and work will go on extendedly in preparing the hulls of vessels against the destruction by salt water that is going on all the time, to the dismay of all shipowners. All that is now needed to demonstrate the success or failure of the process is time. It is expected that the Assistance will be in the water again and in active work in about four weeks.

THREE TENDERLOIN PRECINCTS.

One Has Succeeded Another with the Growth of the City Up Town.

The original Tenderloin precinct in the annals of the Police Department of New York was the Eighth, the station house of which was in Prince street and is now in Macdougal street. Its boundaries are Canal street, Houston street, Broadway, and the North River. It was a great resort for thieves, crooks, and disorderly persons, and furnished the largest amount of police business. In 1870, when the Eighth precinct was at the height of its deplorable prominence, the arrests were 5,500 in a year, against 2,500 in the Twenty-ninth precinct, the present Tenderloin. The Captain best known in connection with the Eighth was Charles McDonald, better known as "Lightning Charley." He was appointed in 1870, and gained his title from service in the Thirty-fifth street station.

With the growth of the city further up town, the moving away of the big hotels, and the encroachments of stores and warehouses in the Eighth precinct the Fifteenth, or Mercer street precinct, became the Tenderloin. Its reign was brief. The Twenty-ninth (now the Nineteenth) precinct, the present Tenderloin, extends from Fourteenth to Forty-second street, and the western boundary is Seventh avenue. It takes in both sides of Broadway, and has a larger number of hotels than any other precinct in this city. The part that gave it its unsavory reputation lies between Sixth and Seventh avenues and Twenty-third and Thirty-fourth streets. At one time both sides of Sixth avenue were largely taken up with concert saloons, and among those in the Tenderloin were the Buckingham, the Star and Garter, the Cremorne, the Empire, the Sans Souci, the Argyle, and the Haymarket. Sixth avenue between Twenty-third and Thirty-fourth streets at that time was as much crowded by night as Broadway is now by day. Arrests were many, and strangers visiting New York came to this neighborhood as one of the sights of the town.

At present the Tenderloin is a name chiefly. Most of the establishments which gave it a national if not an international ill repute have either moved away or have been closed for good. The side streets between Sixth and Seventh avenues and Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth streets are mostly occupied by members of the French colony. It is in the heart of the region of tables d'hôte. Twenty-seventh street, notorious in old Tenderloin days, is now occupied chiefly by colored residents. Thirty-first and Thirty-second streets are given over to business uses. Thirty-first street is mostly occupied by German tenants. A new church has been built there within two years. Sixth avenue is now as quiet at midnight as any other New York thoroughfare up town—decidedly more so than Third or Eighth avenue. The number of arrests in the Nineteenth precinct last year was 4,253, while in the Fifteenth (Mercer street), the arrests were 4,940, and in the Tenth (Eldridge street), 9,184. The Eighth precinct, the Tenderloin of other days, had a total of 1,900 prisoners, of whom 1,620 were men, mostly for minor offences.

THE HOLIDAY DETECTIVE.

An Imposing Figure Very Much in Evidence at the Present Time.

A conspicuous figure in the holiday show of the shops is the special store detective. For two weeks now he has been very much in evidence, and he will cling to his pedestal until the new year comes in. You will find him in every store where articles sufficiently small to be concealed about the person are sold. He usually stands near the door in an imposing attitude. His make-up is that of the dime novel lynx-eyed sleuth, whose quick vision, ever on the alert, moves from object to object, taking in everything. For the rest, he wears a double-breasted sack coat and a vari-colored necktie ornamented with a solitaire diamond. Nobody ever mistakes him for anything but a detective except an occasional old lady from Yonkers or Weehawken, who thinks he is the floor walker, thereby giving him dire offence.

"Could you tell me where the handkerchief counter is?" she asks him timidly.

"No, ma'am," he says sternly. "I am like yourself, a customer here."

Most people are too much impressed by him to ask him any questions. They look at him with interest as they pass and accept him as part of the holiday exhibit. He never looks at them in return, except for a fleeting moment. He is too busy casting his eyes about on all sides. It must not be supposed that he is the regular store detective. That official is probably in the rear part of the store wandering casually about the aisles and now and again following in an unobtrusive way a woman whom he suspects of being a professional shoplifter. Occasionally he makes an arrest. The holiday detective never makes an arrest. He doesn't get the chance. No shoplifter would dare work within the radius of his awe-inspiring gaze. Crooks recognize him as a detective ready at a moment's notice to detect, and they wander along further. He is the ounce of prevention that is worth a pound of cure.

FUDGES AT VASSAR.

A Delightful Home-made Confection That Is Herein Explained.

"Nearly every night at college," said the Vassar girl, "some girl may be found somewhere who is making 'fudges' or giving a fudge party. Fudges are Vassar chocolates, and they are simply the most delicious edibles ever manufactured by a set of sweetmeat-loving girls. Their origin is wrapped in mystery. We only know that their recipe is handed down from year to year by old students to new, and that they belong peculiarly to Vassar.

"To make them take two cups of sugar, one cup of milk, a piece of butter one-half the size of an egg, and a teaspoonful of vanilla extract. The mixture is cooked until it begins to get grainy. Then it is taken from the fire, stirred briskly, and turned into buttered tins. Before it hardens it is cut in squares. You may eat the fudge either cold or hot; it is good either way. It never tastes so delicious, however, as when made at college over a spluttering gas lamp in the seclusion of your own apartment. The various difficulties that this method entails but makes the fudge taste sweeter."

WHICH DRESS THE BETTER?

AN ENGLISHMAN SAYS AMERICANS ARE PADDED TOO MUCH.

Methods of English and American Tailors Compared—A Panegyric of Old Clothes—Englishmen Defended from Criticism.

There is an Englishman in this town who wants to reply to the returned tourist who expressed the opinion in THE SUN last Sunday that Englishmen were not well dressed, as a rule, and were not in it with Americans in this respect. This Englishman has spent about a dozen years here, is fully naturalized, and makes a trip over to the old country about every four years.

"It depends entirely on how one looks at the question," he said. "To start with, all does not lie in the mere fact of good clothes, and the Irishman's idea, as typified in our parades, that a clean pair of shoes highly polished and a new silk hat will cover up any defects of seedy or worn clothes will not go. The man must know how to wear his clothes, and the American system makes this almost impossible, for the wearer is rendered more self-conscious than he otherwise would be by the omnipresent fact that he has a new suit on. Every movement he makes brings this to his mind, for the simple reason that his tailor has insisted on padding his chest and shoulders until he must feel like Cleopatra in "Dombey and Son" when they were putting up the scaffolding on which to build her figure. I think I can say without much fear of contradiction that the majority of New York men are both hollow-chested and round-backed. I do not wish to appear prejudiced, but a walk along the streets will demonstrate this fact. Now, the American tailor takes padding and builds the shoulders back, fills up the chest, raises the tip of the shoulder anywhere up to three inches, and then on this foundation builds a coat that undeniably fits without a crease so long as the model is quiescent. But the wearer feels—and who can blame him?—triced up like a chicken for cooking. He stands before the tailor's glass, and is pleased with the fit, and when he goes out he looks in every window he passes to see if it is still fitting. But woe to him if he raises his arm to take off his hat to a lady, for up goes the wad of padding on the tip of the shoulder and the secret of the fit is revealed. Woe to him if he dangles from a strap on the elevated road after paying his nickel for a seat; he may exercise all his blandishments on the lady seated before him, but the wad is omnipresent, and if he leans unduly forward those behind him can see where the padding on the back ends and the natural spine and flesh begin. After a week or two of wear, there will appear down each side of the chest, stretching from the collar to below the chest, a wrinkle, which will mark the line of padding as plain as the sunshine. The waistcoat will do the same. I will refer to the trousers later.

"What does the artistic English tailor do for the would-be well-dressed man? Well, he looks him over, lets him choose what type of coat he likes, and then gives his advice. For the credit of his business, he will prefer to drape the cloth to a poor figure rather than pad, and I will say that the drape will always keep shape where the pad will crease. If one shoulder is a trifle lower than the other he will put in a pad at the side, extending low down, so as to show as little as possible, but he will not pad if he can help it, and only then to fill hollows, not to build a surface. If the customer is pigeon-breasted, as they say over there (hollow-chested), with the shoulders turned right in on the chest, he will tell the customer that he should wear as much as possible a coat that is not buttoned. This is because the coat can be so cut as to drape the sides of the chest, and the hollowness will scarcely be perceptible unless the coat is thrown back. If the shoulders are badly bent (a very rare thing in young or middle-aged Englishmen) he will suggest a Prince Albert coat, and the skirts of this will be cut so as to hang plumb, and not at an angle of forty-five degrees from the rear to the front, and this coat, while it can be buttoned, is not intended to be worn so. By this means the tailor will hide the defect to a great extent, and, as long as the clothes last, just so long the drape will be in its place, unless, of course, the wearer varies very much in girth. The clothes will be cut large to the figure, to give perfect ease of movement and to avoid wrinkles after short wear. A double-breasted sack coat would scarcely be made by a good firm for a short man if he were to order it. The tailor would remonstrate with him, tell him plainly that it would make him look ridiculous, and the man would, nine times out of ten, take the tailor's advice and either order a cutaway or a Prince Albert. Where style (that god of the metropolitan American) comes in contact with suitability, in England it is invariably thrown to the wall by the well-dressed Englishman.

"Trousers—it should be noted that the critic called them 'pants'—are a vital item, the most conspicuous part of a man's dress. If your legs are of the New York type, which I am sorry to have to describe as overhung at the knees, like a groggy cab horse's, why, you will get a fit all right, for the great bulk of the tailors who make trousers up to $15 appear to have but one idea in this city, and that is a straight line from the thigh to the foot. If you stand with the knees straight and the calf well back, like those symmetrical living pictures, you will find it very difficult to find a tailor who will consent to be persuaded to cut your trousers in any other style; and when you explain to him just how you want them, and even bring him an old pair to cut from, he looks at you in a pitying way, and the result is that you get a pair, cut straight, as usual, which are bagged at the knees in two hours. If you have the overhung knees, your legs look like those of a Baxter street dummy. Another curious feature of the American trousers never found in England is the use of diagonal goods, which were never intended for anything but coats and waistcoats. The secret of the tailor recommending such goods is that he knows perfectly well that they will not keep their shape a week, and that all the pressing in the world will not keep them presentable. That, of course, is all the better for him, and so, of course, is the suit of padded clothes in distinction to the draped one.

"A self-conscious man, who knows his clothes are new and makes it evident to every one that he is painfully aware of that fact, would not pass as a well-dressed man in any country of the world but America, and there are cities here where he would not. The Englishman as a rule has from one to six suits in steady wear if he is in moderate circumstances. His clothes never look painfully new and they never look painfully old; they are best described, perhaps, as unobtrusive. Here the great bulk of men in moderate circumstances buy a suit, say, in the autumn, and day in and day out they wear it until thrown aside. They are in one constant see-saw from clothes bandbox—new to clothes wrinkled, creased, out of shape, but not worn. On a bad day the Englishman will put on a suit of old clothes. Witness Lord Hawke's team that rainy day, and the innumerable paragraphs that greeted the astounding fact that they should go out without umbrellas to see the city in clothes which one paper said were 'beneath criticism.'

"Take the hat. Styles may come and styles may go, but the Englishman of the class we are speaking will go for comfort first and suitability next. He will not wear a narrow brimmed hat on a head with a round face, nor a very wide brimmed one on a narrow face. Those who go around in the streets in those cloth caps are of the type of men who here wear red ties around their necks and strive to be very horsey and very English; we all know them, and what we think about them the sensible Englishman thinks of those cloth cap monstrosities and the wearers of loud checks. As to shoes, patent leathers may be the style, but the well dressed Englishman with a No. 10 foot will not wear them on the street, making people mistake his feet for mirrors. Neither will he outrage the proprieties by going to a public dinner in a new shirt, a new collar, a new hair cut, a new shave, a new tie, and old calfskin boots. Go to Delmonico's the next public dinner and use your eyes. The Englishman will be at ease in his accustomed suit of evening dress; it may be ten years old, but it will not hang about him; but his American prototype will be a painfully dressed and terribly systematically turned out being, as if the dinner was an onerous duty, and he, at least, intended to live up to it.

"Then, if any one will walk down any street in this city and find a man walking without a cane or anything in his hand he will be struck with the peculiar way in which the thumb of each hand is carried, almost at right angles with the rest of the hand, projecting sidewise flat with the palm. That comes from the eternal struggle with the cuff of the shirt which does not fit in the arms, or the shirt which does fit made for a non-reversible cuff, on which a reversible cuff has been foisted. That is never seen in England. Cuffs are not desk ornaments in that land. Neither are the small gravestones of cuff fasteners found there. A well-dressed man there does not wear a large three-carat diamond in one studhole of his shirt, and a gold one or a plain linen one in another; he does not wear a large diamond, and then tuck his tie aside so as to make sure people will see it; he does not wear a jewelled pin in a bowknot at the neck, and in fact he seldom wears even a watch-chain, unless one of the lightest texture. Lastly, he endeavors to get the best cloth he can for his clothes, and he does not consider it necessary to turn his top coat inside out when carried on the arm or thrown over the back of a seat at the theatre, so that people may see how expensive the finish is. He folds his exactly the other way, so that if any soil gets on it it is limited to the overcoat, and not transferred to the undercoat when the outer garment is put on.

"I have not settled the question as to which is the best dressed man. As I said at the start, it is entirely dependent on the way you look at it and what you consider a well-dressed man. It looks like a question of longitude and latitude."

CAREY & SIDES,

Clothing Manufacturers and Retailers,

70 and 72 Bowery

(4 Doors Above Canal St.).

CLOTHING

ON

CREDIT.

No larger or finer Clothing stock than ours can be seen in America, and no better values can be secured by paying spot cash elsewhere. Therefore if an accommodation for you to pay by installments, why not take advantage of our Credit system?

Overcoats and Suits.

MEN'S Long Overcoats.....$10 to $30
Paddock Coats............$20 to $30
Tweed Suits..............$10 to $20
Scotch Cheviot Suits......$12 to $20
Diagonal Cutaway Suits.$15 to $25
Prince Albert Suits.......$18 to $28
BOYS' Suits and Overcoats.... $3 to $10
Children's Suits.............$2.50 to $7

Ladies' Cloaks.

Jackets, Wraps, Long Coats, Reefers, Fur Capes, Genuine Alaska Sealskin Coats and Jackets.

Custom Department.

Men's Suits and Overcoats made to order on Credit, in latest fashion, finest possible in fit, fabric and finish, from an enormous stock of imported and domestic woollens of the most stylish shades and mixtures. Suits, $18 to $50. Overcoats, $18 to $60. Trousers, $4 to $10.

Gold and Silver Watches and Chains on Credit. Gents' Full Dress Suits to Hire.

Weekly or Monthly Payments,

OPEN DAILY UNTIL 9 P. M.

A SPURIOUS OLLIE TEALL.

The Real One Nearly Got a Thrashing Meant for a Wicked Impersonator.

One of the penalties of greatness, as Ollie Teall has found out, is having one's name used without warrant and in circumstances which are apt to result unpleasantly to the proprietor of the name. Since Ollie has injected himself into politics, with a view of subsequently injecting himself into the Street Cleaning Commissionership, all sorts of sayings and doings, of which he is entirely innocent, have been attributed to him. A few days ago, as he was sitting in his office in William street, an excited stranger entered. The stranger was big. So was the cane which he flourished excitedly as he demanded of the darky at the door:

"Is Oliver Sumner Teall here?"

"Yes, sir; he's here," said the man. "Did you want to see him on business?"

"See him on business!" cried the visitor shucking off his overcoat and doing a pas seul in front of the astonished man. "I want to smash his head. I want to break him in two. I want to step on his face and jump on his stomach and fall on him like a stone wall and pulverize him to atoms. I want to—wow!" concluded the stranger, venting all his feelings in a snort of concentrated rage and disgust.

Meantime Mr. Teall, who had been sitting at his desk in the corner, got up and prepared to retreat just as the rattled doorman exclaimed:

"There's M-m-mister Teall, r-r-r-right there."

Two skips, a hop, and a leap brought the irate man to the up-and-down-town politician.

"Now I've got you," he cried, raising his cane. "Now I've got—why, you aren't Oliver Sumner Teall," he broke off, his jaw dropping.

"Y-y-yes, I am. That is, n-n-no, I'm not," stammered Ollie. "I mean it's just as you say."

At this the visitor cooled down and sat down. He introduced himself as the secretary of a prominent up-town club, and said that he had come to wreak vengeance upon a man who had insulted him and his wife. He supposed this man to be Ollie Teall. The insult occurred on a Brooklyn trolley car in which he and his wife were riding. A crowd of men in evening dress got on the car and began to swear and use bad language. From their conversation the club man gathered that they had just come from a dinner of the Union League Club of Brooklyn. Finally their conversation became so outrageous that he appealed to the conductor, who put them off. As they filed out one of them said, pointing to the man who had made the greatest disturbance:

"You'll get into trouble for this. Do you know who that is? That's Oliver Sumner Teall."

So the club man looked up Ollie's address and came around to thrash him, only to find that he had the wrong man. Now he is busy looking for the right one. But the strangest part of the whole thing, Ollie says, is that anybody should mistake any other man for him.

THE DOG HAD A SMOKE, TOO.

An Exhibition that Made Holiday Shoppers Pause with All Their Hurry.

Twenty-third street was crowded with early evening holiday shoppers. Most of them had bundles, and all of them showed that nervous hurry that characterizes Christmas purchasers. The one leisurely figure in the crowd was a young man in a long frock coat, embellished with a bunch of carnations, the most shining of shoes, and a tall hat scarcely less shining, who had a black spaniel attached to a chain. The spaniel would have liked to be leisurely, too, but he had to skip about with much agility to avoid having his paws trodden on.

In his saunterings the young man came to a little heap of packing boxes obstructing the sidewalk. He unfastened the dog's chain and whistled in a peculiar way. The spaniel leaped up on the highest box as if it were only a step, instead of four feet high, and sat up with one paw at salute. The hurrying shoppers stopped as if a brick wall had appeared in front of them, and gathered around the box. The young man took no notice of them.

"Now, my boy," said he to the dog, "we'll have a quiet smoke. Cigarette or pipe?"

As he spoke he drew one of each of these articles from his pocket. The spaniel barked when the pipe appeared.

"Pipe, eh?" said his master. "You're very English, chappie, aren't you? Well, I'll take the cigarette myself."

He handed the pipe to the dog, who seized it in his teeth. Then the young man filled and lighted it, lighting his own cigarette with the same match. The dog held the pipe up and apparently puffed at it.

"Like it now, don't you?" said the young man; "but you didn't use to. How did you feel when you first smoked?"

Down dropped the pipe from the spaniel's mouth. He clasped his paws pathetically over his stomach; his ears dropped, his head hung down, and he looked the picture of misery. The crowd roared with delight.

"Why, what a crowd you've gathered, old man," said the master to his dog, in apparent astonishment. "You'll have to move on or the police will be after you. Now say good-by and hop down."

Straightening up, the performer made a military salute first to one side, then to the other, and with a joyful bark jumped down and joined his master as he sauntered on.

"What are you advertising, mister?" called one of the crowd.

But the young man only smiled and turned up Broadway.

Deutsch & Co

Fifth Avenue, Cor. 22 St.

Grand Bargains

Prior to

Removal.

Our Trade Mark Guarantees Quality, Style, Fit & Finish.

Lamb's Wool Stylish Coats,	$12;	Formerly $25.
Imported Boucle Stylish Coats,	$20;	Formerly $40.
Persiana Cloth Circular Capes,	$22;	Formerly $40.
Imported Cloths Stylish Coats,	$25;	Formerly $50.
Silk Velvet Theatre Capes,	$45;	Formerly $90.
Imported Velvet Embroidered Coats,	$100;	Formerly $200.
Plaid Velvet & Chiffon Bodices,	$19;	Formerly $48.
Black Crepon Organ Pipe Skirts,	$22;	Formerly $35.

And Many Other Bargains Too Numerous to Mention.

Deutsch & Co.,

5th Ave., cor. 22d St.

IN WINTER SUNSHINE.

The Jolly Times that the Children and Others Are Having in the Parks.

To say that people have been able, without fear of chills or chilblains, to sit sunning themselves in New York's parks and squares within a week of Christmas Day sounds like the telling of a seasonable fairy story. Yet it is a strict climatic fact, as any one may have seen who has spared the time to take his eyes off the enticements of the store windows.

At no time during these days after the sun has risen above the housetops have the benches in Madison and Union squares borne their ordinary vacant, wintry expression until he has gone down behind the houses of the western streets. Future legal luminaries, studying in great calf-bound law books, have shifted round in their seats as the greatest luminary of all has moved in his course; bustling, time-pressed men and women by the hundreds have sat down for a few minutes snatched from the noon meal time and have shut their eyes and held their faces up to the sun in the glorious luxury of feeling warm in winter and having nothing to pay for fuel. Loafers by the score have dozed behind scraps of newspapers and dreamed of sun baths and Florida without the nightmare shadow of a park policeman. Cheerful visitors, with a tired look about the eyes from seeing too many things in too short a time and with a litter of Christmas presents around them, have sat down and eaten luncheon in the good sunshine; and nice old gentlemen have rested a moment or two to open genial confidences with utter strangers about the glorious climate of New York, and to speak reminiscently of other such splendid spells of winter sunshine, "right here in this city, sir," and have gone off snorting defiantly about California and the islands of the Southern Seas.

Down in Washington square and over in Stuyvesant square the children have been having a fine time. Even the most prudent of nurses have turned back the heavy fur robes from their sleeping charges, and the youngsters rollicking about in the sunshine have come up to their governesses all rosy and panting, and have begged to have their cloaks removed.

Out in Central Park there has been great joy among the pedestrians who, without the burden of overcoats, and clad only in heavy fall garments, have swung along the still paths, all dappled with sunshine and shadow; open carriages have been the order of the day; the voices of horsemen and horsewomen have been heard from the bridle paths; and the great Croton reservoir has gleamed in the winter sunshine as though there were no such things as ice and frozen mains.

And everywhere, in the Park and the downtown breathing places, lovers have sat and held hands and said things to each other that were warmer even than the sunshine. But, then, they have been said and overheard doing that in the midst of a windy night's snowstorm.

THE NEW STEP.

A Pretty Clog Dancer Who Was Afraid She Might Lose It.

There were several good and sufficient reasons why people should stop and look at her. She was young and pretty, was as trim as a whip from top to toes; the one being covered with a soft brown hat, having an alpine plume of feathers stuck jauntily at the side, and the others being covered with snugly fitting shoes with low flat heels. Yet pretty as the top was—and it was decidedly pretty with its loose light hair, blue eyes, and fresh cheeks—it was the toes that attracted most attention. She did not seem able to keep them still.

It would be wrong, therefore, to say that she was standing on Seventeenth street, near Union square, waiting for a cross-town car, but it is no offence against the pure spirit of journalistic veracity to say that that is where she was seen.

Soon the bootblacks lounging on the sidewalk saw her and her tripping feet, and sat down on their little boxes to watch her or them. But the girl never noticed her visitors, and, with her eyes intently fixed on her feet, moved them briskly this way and that, two little flips to the left, two little slides to the right, her lips meanwhile moving as though she were counting. Her hands hung straight at her sides, and her whole expression was one of seriousness and utter oblivion to her surroundings.

It was not long before the bootblacks were joined by some men. Then one or two women halted a moment, and soon there was quite a crowd on the sidewalk—a decent, orderly crowd. Still the girl seriously footed it on the crosswalk. Then a Broadway policeman saw the crowd and moved ponderously over to find out what the matter was. A few shoves and pushes broke up the audience, and then the policeman stepped up to the girl and touched her with Lexowesque gentleness on the shoulder.

"What for are ye afther attractin' attention in the strates, miss?" he inquired.

The girl stopped footing it and looked up with astonishment into the officer's face.

"Was I attracting attention?" she inquired. "Indeed, I'm very sorry, Mr. Officer; but, you see, I'm studying to be a clog dancer, and I've just learned a new step, and I was so afraid I'd forget it before I got home that I guess I must have been practising it while I was waiting for the car. And here is the car, and excuse me."

With that she got into the car, and as it progressed archaically along one could see the girl's head bend down to watch her feet, and knew that she was still practising the new step.

The Currycomb Cure.

"I beg to suggest," said Col. Goblinton, "currycombs as a cure for the man who sits slued around in his seat in the elevated car, with his back projecting over the arm of your seat, thinking only of himself and thoughtless of your comfort and rights a currycomb worn inside the sleeve, at about the height of the elbow, and with the teeth out."